

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5174

As of January 21, 2009

Title: An act relating to graduation rate improvements.

Brief Description: Providing an incentive to improve on-time graduation rates at institutions of higher education.

Sponsors: Senators Shin, Kastama, McAuliffe, Pridemore, Rockefeller, Keiser, Delvin, Hobbs, Hatfield and Kohl-Welles.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Higher Education & Workforce Development: 1/28/09.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Staff: Aldo Melchiori (786-7439)

Background: Each public institution of higher education may enter into a student progression understanding (understanding) with an interested student. The terms of the understanding must permit a student to obtain a degree or certificate within the standard period of time assumed for a full-time student pursuing that degree or certificate. The standard amount of time is assumed to be about two years for an associate of arts degree and about four years for a baccalaureate degree. Student progression understandings do not give rise to any cause of action on behalf of any student as a result of the failure of any institution to fulfill its obligations under the understanding.

Tuition fees consist of building fees and operating fees. Building fees are used to fund institutional construction equipment and maintenance costs. Operating fees include the fees, other than building fees, charged all students registering at the state's colleges and universities. They do not include fees for short courses, self-supporting degree credit programs and courses, marine station work, experimental station work, correspondence or extension courses, and individual instruction and student deposits or rentals, disciplinary and library fines, laboratory, gymnasium, health, technology and student activity fees, or fees, charges, rentals, and other income derived from any or all revenue producing lands, buildings, and facilities of the colleges or universities.

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Summary of Bill: Students who enter into student progression understandings pay the same operating fees as they did for their initial term. If a student does not obtain the certificate or degree in the time established in the understanding, the student must pay the difference in operating fee increases, with interest. If the failure to obtain the certificate or degree is due to the institution's failure to perform under the understanding, the student does not have to pay the difference.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 20, 2009.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.